

LETTERS

No love for the CIA

In his review of *The Espionage Establishment* (November 12) Mr. Thomas W. Braden . . . disputes the book's claim that the CIA is often not subject to executive and Congressional control. He presents instead a pretty picture of a beleaguered agency suffering from overcontrol originating in the Defense Department, the State Department, and Congress. The pretty picture unfortunately is a phony. The Defense Intelligence Agency (DIA) was specifically created a few years ago to provide a check for the CIA because the Pentagon felt the CIA was getting out of hand. Most of the State Department people the CIA allegedly must answer to are actually high-level agents using their diplomatic status as a cover. As for the Congressional watchdog committee for the CIA, I have talked to members of that committee as a newsman and they have complained that the briefings they receive from the CIA are superficial and often misleading, that important opera-

tions are omitted, allegedly for security reasons, and that some operations which were later revealed in the daily press would not have been approved by the committee.

Mr. Braden also insists that the authors are wrong when they say the CIA engages in domestic activities, which the agency is legally barred from carrying out. This is nonsense. It has been admitted that the CIA paid up to 80 per cent of the budget for the National Student Association for a period of years. NSA is primarily a domestic not a foreign organization. The agency has also paid for the writing and publication of several books which were and are sold on the book stands without any CIA seals. These books were aimed at the U.S. reader and I'm afraid I must call that a domestic operation. There are a lot more domestic operations which the reader can find in the book and for that matter in *The New York Times* series on the CIA about a year ago . . .

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